

"You are what you think you are. If you think you are the best then you are; if you think you are nothing then you are nothing." That is what I would hear every Saturday morning coming from the bottom of the steps. Then, a stamped of foot steps would rush down the stairs as all 13 grandchildren came down in tow behind me, the oldest. We were all repeating "you are what you think you are." At the bottom of the steps would be my granny. From there she would lead us to the front door where we would all shield our faces from the sun. When the door was opened she would look at the "zombies" on the street corner. Zombies are what she would call people who did not care about life and wasted their lives by becoming drug addicts and acholics.

My grandma would ask "who wants to be a zombie." I would raise my hand being sarcastic, but other than that no one spoke a word. She would shoo us out of the way and close the door, then sit us all down on the couch and pass out 13 books for an "hour of reading and nothing less." That was her motto. She was a cool lady, always encouraging me to try new things because when I was younger I was shy and stayed off to myself. She would ask me to help her cook or come keep her company while she cooked. I would sit in the chair, then I would walk to the stove where eventually, she would ask me to cut up onions and bell peppers for her meatloaf. After awhile, I would meet her faithfully in the kitchen everyday to help cook, even though she gave out orders like a drill sergeant and I was the private. My favorite thing about being in the kitchen was that I got to taste the food first.

My granny basically raised me and when she passed I was angry at the world and blamed everybody for her death. Seeing her lie in that hospital bed not moving, just lifeless, I felt like my life had just ended. I wanted to die. I didn't care about anything or anybody anymore. I stopped doing school work, and was angry all the time at everyone. But, as time progressed I started to cope with it. I went back to school and focused on bringing my grades up because that was something that was always instilled in me by my granny. She taught me that the only way to be successful was through education.

When I went back to school on a Monday, it was boring and the teacher was talking really slow and taking her time. I really did not want to be there but I was ready to work and this was my first day back at school spiritually and mentally. I had a project and it was to build

a house out of "whatever." So I built my house out of a cardboard box .I painted bricks on it. I cut out windows and put plastic in them so they could look like windows. I created furniture for the house such as a living room set, a kitchen, and a master bedroom.My house even had a second floor.

When I received my grade I was ecstatic because I had gotten an "A " and I remembered something my granny would say , "What you put in to life is what you get back." After that, I was thinking " why not apply myself in all other classes, " and that I'm "going to go through hard times in life but I can not let that hold me back." You have to move on," and that is exactly what I did . I went back to school and decided that the people in my life, friends who were not going to help me reach my goals and were not trying to do much with their lives, had to go. I believe that we go through things for a reason and that you can overcome any obstacle. I also believe no one has a limit to what their success can be. You only excel as far as you let yourself " You are what you think you are! "